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SEGA™



SEGA SATURN™

T-12702H

SHINING WISDOM™

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\$10,000
DETAILS INSIDE



Action/RPG

Working Designs Ultra Series



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FOR PLAY ON THE SEGA SATURN™ SYSTEM.





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- Do not bend it, crush it, or submerge it in liquids.
- Do not leave it in direct sunlight or near a radiator or other source of heat.
- Be sure to take an occasional recess during extended play, to rest yourself and the Sega Saturn compact disc.
- KEEP YOUR Sega Saturn disc clean. Always hold by the edges, and keep in its case when not in use. Clean with a lint-free, soft dry cloth - wiping in straight lines from center to edge. Never use solvents or abrasive cleaners.

WARNING: READ BEFORE USING YOUR SEGA VIDEO GAME SYSTEM.

A very small percentage of individuals may experience epileptic seizures when exposed to certain light patterns or flashing lights. Exposure to certain patterns or backgrounds on a television screen or while playing video games may induce an epileptic seizure in these individuals. Certain conditions may induce previously undetected epileptic symptoms even in persons who have no history of prior seizures or epilepsy. If you, or anyone in your family, has an epileptic condition, consult your physician prior to playing. If you experience any of the following symptoms while playing a video game - dizziness, altered vision, eye or muscle twitches, loss of awareness, disorientation, any involuntary movement, or convulsions - IMMEDIATELY discontinue use and consult your physician before resuming play.

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Table of Contents

Kingdom of Odegan	2
Background	4
The Players	5
Minions of Evil	7
Before You Begin	8
Satura Backup RAM	9
Starting the Game	10
Configuration Screen	12
Saving The Game	14
Mystical Items	15
Magical Orbs	16
Monsterville	17
Hints for Gimps	18
\$10,000 Contest	19
Translation Notes	20



NOTE: This product has been rated by the *Entertainment Software Rating Board*. For information about the ESRB rating, or to comment about the appropriateness of the rating, please contact the *ESRB* at 1-800-771-3772.

Kingdom of Odegan



Background



Odegan is a simple place. Simple People. Simple Laws. Simple Concerns. For the most part, peace and tranquility have rested comfortably in this diverse land for centuries. Encircled by a charmed ring of mountains on the continent of Palacia, the Kingdom is naturally shielded from the wars and uprisings that have consumed and destroyed nearby kingdoms. However, it was not always so.

Long before, when the wars of reason raged across Palacia, a fearsome giant, or 'Dark Titan' as it came to be known, rose to exile peace forever with its wicked hand. Fortunately, those gifted with the command of magic banded together and felled the apocalyptic terror.

Presently, that time lies far removed from the minds of most in Odegan. Only a studious few recall the prophecy that appeared when the Dark Titan was destroyed. It spoke of a time of unrest that would precede the return of the Dark Titan. A time when the four elementals would rise to restore the Titan, and the land would once again be consumed by darkness until the very stone of Castle Odegan wept tears of misery.

The fulfillment of this prophecy is not coming without warning. Ten years from the present, a fierce dragon of unusual strength laid much of Odegan to waste. The beast would have decimated all Palacia, were it not for the bravery and cunning of a single warrior who sacrificed his very life to stop it. That warrior was known as Sir Jiles.

Now, ten years later, his only son has come of age. Like his father, he, too, will serve in the King's guard. Only time will tell if he grows to possess the strength, courage, and cunning of his legendary father. But pray that time holds this lad in favor, for the black hour of the Dark Titan is rushing forth from the abyss once more, and Odegan lies blissfully unaware...

The Players

Mars

Mars is the son of Sir Jiles, the greatest warrior in Odegan's history. After his parent's untimely death, Mars' grandparents assumed the task of raising the lad. Ebinezer, Mars' grandfather, has devoted much of his time teaching him the ancient skill of 'acceleration'. Mars has been an excellent student, and is now prepared to begin his service in the King's guard at Odegan Castle.



Princess Satera

Princess Satera, the King's sole heir, is a flaxen-haired, porcelain-skinned beauty, dearly loved by the inhabitants of Odegan. Though she knows much of the outside world through her studies with Bouchvurm, she has never been allowed outside the castle by her father. This kind of overprotective behavior on the part of the King has been the rule rather than the exception ever since Satera's mother, the Queen, died unexpectedly.



The Players

King Ulrich

Ulrich has served as King of Odegan since he was a young man. Due to the fact that Odegan has been basically peaceful during his reign, he has grown obese and complacent. Despite being horizontally challenged, he is dearly loved by his subjects.

Chancellor

The King's Chancellor is a spiteful, vindictive personality. As such, he doesn't have time for pleasantries, and usually forgoes them. He considers himself well organized and indispensable to the success of the kingdom, and his subjects hate him.

Sir Kaizel

This commander is the head of the guard at Odegan Castle, and the King's top tactician. He also happened to be the closest friend of Sir Jiles. His allegiance to the Odegan Empire is without equal, and the troops trust his decisions completely.

Alfred

Although older than Mars, this new recruit is somewhat immature and prone to getting in trouble, then lying his way out of the consequences. Though his gentle manner makes him seem unambitious, he is actually striving to gain a place of honor in Odegan's Guard.

Parn

This somewhat mysterious Elf is frequently seen in the area of Hobbit Village. Details of his existence are hard to come by, but he seems familiar with both Pazort and the Royal Family of Odegan. He's also rumored to know many secrets about Castle Odegan.

Gudo Valley Fairy

This shapely sprite is said to be the guardian of the Gudo Valley. Magicians have whispered of her ability to shapeshift at will for centuries. Her magic ability is only matched by her playful nature.

6

Minions of Evil

Gwaid

As the master of fire, Gwaid is the most dangerous of Pazort's minions. His steel faceplate was crafted to conceal a wound inflicted by Sir Jiles.

Nuge

Though his love for Kari may cloud his battle judgment at times, Nuge is a formidable opponent. Once he begins his tumbling attack, watch out!

Kari

As the only female in Pazort's inner-circle, Kari possesses skills the others can only dream about. Her most useful ability is the power to mirror animate or inanimate things with Pazort's assistance.

Bangar

This reptilian ruffian fancies himself a fearsome foe. However, the truth is that his power is limited when he's away from a body of water.

Pazort

This devious black Elf is the sworn enemy of Palacia and the Kingdom of Odegan. His power is only surpassed in the world of darkness by the Dark Titan.

7

Before You Begin

Before you turn on your SEGA Saturn, make sure it is properly connected according to the SEGA Saturn instructions. Insert the Shining Wisdom CD into the well of the CD tray and close the lid. Next press the **START** button at the title screen (or, select the Saturn icon on the CD screen). The opening animation screen should appear. If the unit fails to function correctly, turn it off. Check to see if the SEGA Saturn is connected properly and then try again.

When you have finished playing, select **SAVE** before turning off your SEGA Saturn. Always make sure you turn off your SEGA Saturn before you try to remove the Shining Wisdom CD.

IMPORTANT: Your SEGA Saturn CD contains a security code that allows the disc to be read. Be sure to keep the disc clean and handle it carefully. If your SEGA Saturn system has trouble keeping the disc, remove the disc and wipe it carefully, starting from the center of the disc and wiping straight out toward the edge.

Know Your Controller



A Special Note about the Controller

NOTE: The configuration of the A, B, C, X, Y, and Z buttons can be changed. For clarity, the manual is written with the default controller settings.

Saturn™ Backup Ram



Since you cannot save games directly on a compact disc, the Sega Saturn™ is equipped with Internal Backup RAM. Most CD games have a save feature that uses it. If you are having difficulty saving games, you may need to delete some previously saved data or copy some of the save data to a Backup RAM cartridge. If your memory is full, you will need to make room by deleting save data from the Backup RAM.

Accessing the Memory Manager

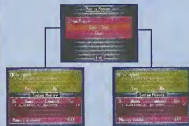
To access the System Settings menu quickly, when you turn on your Sega Saturn™, hold down the Right and Left Shift buttons on the controller (If the game unit is already turned on, press the **RESET** button while holding down the Left and Right Shift buttons). From the System Settings Screen, select **Memory Manager**.



From this screen you can either delete specific, any, or all of the save data files in the System Backup RAM. The box below describes in detail how to delete save data. **Remember, once save data is deleted it can never be recovered...so don't come crying to us if you delete something you really wanted.**

Deleting Selected Data

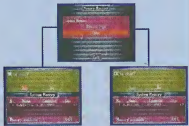
To delete specific save data on your SEGA Saturn™, select the **REMOVE ITEM** option from the System Memory box and press the "A" button. The Delete screen will then appear. Next, decide which file you wish to erase.



If you select **YES**, the save data file will be erased, freeing up more memory for you to save games.

Deleting All Save Data

To clear all of the save data files on your SEGA Saturn™, select the **CLEAR** option from the System Memory box and press the "A" button.



If you select **YES**, all of the save data will be erased. **Once erased, Memory Manager you can NEVER get screen without losing any save data.**

NOTE: If the message **NOT REMOVED!** appears, there may be a problem with the system's backup memory. For assistance in fixing this problem, call 1-800-USA-SEGA.

Starting the Game

If the START button is pressed during the opening animation, the Title Screen will appear. To begin playing Shining Wisdom, press the START button at the title screen.

After pressing the START button at the title screen, the Gudo Valley Fairy will appear. If there is no Shining Wisdom save data, the Fairy will ask for a character name at the Name Registration Screen. If there is already Shining Wisdom save data present on the backup RAM, then the load screen will be displayed.



The default name for the character is Mars; however, another name can be entered if desired. The character name can be up to eight characters in length. To name the character, move the cursor over the desired letter, then press the "C" button. The selected letter will then appear in the name box. Continue entering letters until the desired character name is displayed. To correct a mistake, select "DEL" or press the "B" button. After entering the desired character name, select "END." The game will then begin.

The Load Screen is divided into two different sections. The left side displays all save data, as well as the "New Game" option. The right side displays the following: character's name, game time, life bubbles, equipped items, start location, and save data location ("System" or "Cartridge Memory").

To start from the beginning of the game, select "New Game." After selecting "New Game," the Name Registration Screen will be displayed. After a name has been entered, select "END." The game will then begin.



After selecting the desired game, the Action Menu will appear. The Action Menu allows the game to be loaded, to be copied to/from System and Cartridge Memory, or to be deleted. These three options are described in detail on the following page.



NO SAVE DATA

EXISTING DATA



Load Menu



Load the selected game. After receiving some parting wisdom from the Gudo Valley Fairy, the game will start from the selected save location. To load games from the Backup RAM cartridge, first make sure that the RAM cartridge is firmly inserted into the cartridge slot of the Saturn *before* the system is turned on. **NEVER INSERT THE CARTRIDGE WHEN THE UNIT IS TURNED ON!**



Copy games to/from backup RAM. Save data can be copied to/from the System/Cartridge Memory. Copies of the save data can also be made to the same memory location. In order to use the Backup RAM cartridge, first make sure that the RAM cartridge is firmly inserted into the cartridge slot of the Saturn *before* the system is turned on. **NEVER INSERT THE CARTRIDGE WHEN THE UNIT IS TURNED ON!**



Delete selected save data. If a game save is no longer needed, it can be deleted from the System or Backup RAM. To delete a game, first select which save data to delete from the Load Screen, then press the "C" button. The Action Menu will be displayed. From the Action Menu, select "DELETE." The decision must then be confirmed with a "YES/NO" answer.



Deletes selected save data. If "YES" is selected, the save data will be deleted from the System or Backup RAM. *Remember, if you agree to delete the save data, it can never be recovered...ever!* So, spend a few seconds carefully pondering the fate of the game save *before* it's actually erased. This will eliminate any need to spend countless nights alone, curled into a fetal position, desperately clutching a controller while shedding tears of regret and self-loathing.



Cancels the command. The save data will not be deleted, and the game will return to the Action Menu.



Configuration Screen

To change the configuration of the game, press the "START" button once the game has started. The Configuration Screen will be displayed. It is divided into three sections: Equipment, Configuration, and Options. In order to access other screens, use the "LEFT" or "RIGHT" Shift Buttons (i.e. press the "RIGHT SHIFT" button to advance to the next screen. Use the "LEFT SHIFT" button to visit a previous screen). These screens are described below.

Equipment

Select items, orbs, or equipment. To change items, orbs, or equipment, first press the "START" button to access the Equipment Screen. Once the Equipment Screen is displayed, move the cursor up or down to select which area (item, orb, equip) to adjust, then press the "C" button. The cursor will then move to the items in that area. Use the cursor to select which item to use, then press the "C" button. The item will be selected and assigned for use with that button. After returning to the game, the item can be used by pressing the button assigned to that item.



Configuration

Change message speed, key configuration, and transmission type. From the equipment screen, pressing the "RIGHT SHIFT" button on the controller will access the Configuration screen. To change any of these options, first move the cursor to select which option to change and press the "C" button. Next, use the cursor to change the settings. After making the necessary changes, press the "C" button to confirm the changes. To exit from the Configuration Screen and return to the game, press the "B" button



MESSAGE SPEED Speed at which messages are printed in boxes. The message display can be fast or slow, according to the speed chosen. There are four different message speeds: slow, normal, fast, or turbo. "Slow" is the slowest, and "turbo" is the fastest. (*Duh!*)

KEY CONFIG Button configuration for items, orbs, or equipment. Items, orbs, or equipment can be reassigned to most of the available buttons on the controller. Use the Direction Key to reassign the buttons.

TRANSMISSION Determines how the character maintains speed. Since the "B" button ("X", "Y", or "Z" buttons can also be used) is used to build up speed, the transmission type determines how that speed is maintained. A Semi-automatic transmission allows the character to maintain the desired speed by holding down the "B" button. Whereas, a Manual transmission requires that the "B" button be continually pressed in order to maintain that speed.

Options

Change message speed, key configuration, and transmission type. To access the Option Screen, press the "Right Shift" button twice from the Equipment Screen. If an option on the Option Screen needs to be changed, first move the cursor to select that option and press the "C" button. Next, use the cursor to make the necessary changes and press the "C" button to confirm the changes. To exit from the Option Screen, press the "B" button.



WINDOW MODE Change the text box display and colors.

The background of the text boxes can be changed to determine how the text box color is displayed. If "Nothing" is selected, no color will be displayed; however, if "Normal" is selected, a solid background color will be displayed. The "RED," "GREEN," and "BLUE" colors can be adjusted to create custom colors for the text box.

SOUND MODE Determines how the sound is heard.

The sound can be listened to in "STEREO" (Goooo!) or "MONO" (Baaaa!).

MUSIC TEST Music themes.

Sadomasochistic, socially isolated types can use this option to take a little break from the game and spend precious hours of their lives listening to all of the musical themes in the game.

S.E. TEST Sound Effects.

This option can be used to play the sound effects used in the game to your heart's content.

Status Screen

Items

Currently equipped items. These items can be used by pressing either the "A" "B", or "C" buttons.

Life Bubbles

Character's life. The flames will die out when the character is injured. When all the flames disappear, so will the character.



Speed

Speed at which the character is moving.

Gold

Amount of gold coins collected during the quest.

Saving the Game

A game can only be saved at the church in Odegan city or with the use of a Record Book. Record Books are automatically used to save the game when a new area is entered, such as a cave, or a dungeon. If the user agrees to use it, the game will be saved. Save options are the same for churches and Record Books.



The Save Screen is divided into two different sections. The left side displays all save data, including the "New Data" option. The right side displays the following: character's name, game time, life bubbles, equipped items, start location, and save data location (System or Cartridge Memory).

The "New Data" option allows a new save data file to be created without changing the existing save data file(s). After this option is selected, the Memory Selection Screen will appear. At that point, choose whether to save the game to the System or the Cartridge Memory. Once a decision is made, press the "C" button. The game will be saved.



To overwrite an existing save data file, first select which save data to replace and press the "C" button. In order to overwrite the existing game, select "YES." If "NO" is selected, the game will not be overwritten and the game will return to the Save Screen.



After saving the game at the church, the user must decide whether or not to continue playing the game. If "YES" is selected, the game will continue. If "NO" is selected, the game will end. *If a Record Book is being used, this option is not available.*

Shops

Gold can be found by searching treasure chests or by defeating monsters. As monsters are defeated, they will leave gold coins or bags of coins that can be used to purchase different items. To purchase an item, first move in front of the item you wish to purchase and press the "C" button. The decision to purchase that item must then be confirmed by answering "YES" or "NO."



Purchases the selected item. The item will be purchased and placed into the character's inventory.



Cancels the purchase.

Mystical Items

During the quest, many items can be found in treasure boxes or bought at local shops. Many of the items are located in secret areas of the game. Here is a brief overview of some of the many items that can be found.

Healing Herb



Restores HP. This item can only be used once.

Stone Shoes



Slows character movement, but allows floors to be crushed and heavy objects to be kicked out of the way.

Slide Shoes

These can be useful for sliding under objects that obstruct paths.



Magic Hands

Can attack enemies from a distance. Also can be used with orbs to create tres' cool magic attacks.



Hercules Glove

Increases strength. Allows heavy items to be lifted and thrown out of the way.



Mole Claw

Once equipped, allows the user to dig underground.



Spring Shoes

Enables the wearer to jump over holes and traps with ease.



Wonder Mirror

This mysterious mirror supposedly opens the way to another world.



Pegasus Helm

Legend speaks of a time when this would once again be seen in the land. It's said to allow one to fly...



Monkey Suit

This magic suit allows the user to climb and scale vines.



Magical Orbs

Orb Power

The Elementals guard four orbs that must be found and used to defeat Pazort. Unfortunately, the Orbs are scattered all around the Odegan Empire.



Freeze Orb

This orb has the power to control the element of water.

Blaze Orb

Allows the wearer to wield the magic of fire. Use this orb to blast through icy obstacles.



Blast Orb

Those with this orb can create wind blasts that can move or destroy items.

Melding Items

Create stronger magic attacks by combining equipment with orbs. To meld items, an orb and a piece of equipment must be equipped to the character. Next, push the "B" button ("X", "Y", or "Z" buttons can be used) continually to build up speed. Once the speed gauge has reached maximum, push the "C" button. The magic spell will then be unleashed. The chart below shows the magic effect of combining some items. *Experiment with combining items, the effect can be quite enlightening.*

Monsterville

Boobarian

This free-thinking, free-floating spirit can effortlessly pass through any object as it homes in to claim your soul.



Winged Sucka

These flying menaces tend to prowl near trees, waiting for their intended victims to come near before swooping in for the kill.



Husky Porker

This rotund little menace likes to bludgeon his enemies to death with his crude wooden stick.



Scorpion

Be wary of sandy areas, because these persistent pain-peddlers like to remain concealed under the golden grains until unsuspecting prey wanders near.



Prickle Popper

These little buggers enjoy shooting their thorny projectiles into any moving object that comes near.



Count Fangula

This little devil likes to jab opponents with its pointy little spear.



Lunabomber

When in the area past the Millennial Tree, keep one eye peeled toward the wild blue yonder for these bomb-wielding ya-hoos.



Rude Mantis

Just wait until you feel the sickle-shaped claws on this sucker ripping into your flesh. Ahhh, hurts so good!



Ice Snail

These snails live in the colder regions of the empire. Their slimy excretions can cause damage.

Hints for Gimps

Equip the Sword!

When the game first begins, the character is not equipped with any items. For information on how to equip items, see page 12. This is the number one mistake that is made when starting the game. It's amazing how much easier it is to kill things when using something other than bare hands!



Max. Speed for Max. Magic!

The effect of magic is directly related to the speed that the magic is executed. The higher the speed, the more effective the magic. The magic speed and its effectiveness is displayed to the right.



Reconfigure the Controller!

Reconfiguring the controller will make it easier to use equipment and items. It is best, as soon as the game begins, to switch the "A" and "C" buttons. The optimum configuration is: "A" button for equipment, "B" button for orbs, and the "C" button for items.



Visit Areas Again!

The key to winning the game is to visit areas again. Many times a dungeon or cave cannot be fully explored until certain items, orbs, or equipment is received. After receiving the new item, orb, or equipment, go back and finish exploring areas already visited.



Search with Orbs!

In order to find all of the secret items and win the \$10,000, use the orbs to search for secret areas. For instance, use the Blaze Orb to burn down trees or use the Blast Orb as a giant leaf blower in order to clear away leaves. Only by using the orbs, can all of the secret items be found!



\$10,000 Contest

Grand Prize (1): \$10,000

First Prizes (25): One Year Subscription to EGM

Runner up Prizes (100): Deluxe Shining Wisdom Poster

Entry Deadline: November 1, 1996

To enter:

Send a legible photograph or a video tape showing the final status summary screen (sample depicted at left) from the end of the SEGA Saturn Action/RPG Shining Wisdom, along with a 3x5 card or paper containing your name, address, age, and phone number to: Shining Wisdom Contest c/o Working Designs, 18135 Clear Creek Road,

Redding, CA 96001.

Rules:

Enter as often as you wish, but only the single fastest time submitted by any one individual will be entered for final consideration. Limit one submission per game. Duplicate game submissions derived from the same raw data sources submitted by different individuals will be disqualified. Times and finish percentages gained by using software modification codes and/or hardware will be disqualified. Winner may be required to demonstrate skill used to gain winning time in order to claim grand prize. Entries must be received by November 1, 1996. All entries become the property of Working Designs, Inc., and will not be acknowledged or returned. Working Designs, Inc. assumes no responsibility for lost, misplaced, late, ineligible, incomplete, postage-due, or undelivered entries. Unclaimed prizes will not be awarded. Limit one prize per family, organization, or household.

Prize Details:

One (1) Grand prize: \$10,000. Twenty-five (25) First Prizes: One year subscription to Electronic Gaming Monthly (Approximate retail value \$60). One Hundred (100) Runner-up Prizes: Shining Wisdom Poster (Approximate retail value \$7). Winners will be determined on the basis of the fastest completion time amongst those entries with the highest completion ratio (as reported on the status screen) as an entry requirement. Judges' decision to be made the week of November 4th, and winner will be notified by November 15th. All judges' decisions are final. Grand prize winner will be notified by Federal Express. Runner-up prize winners will be notified by mail. Results will be published in Electronic Gaming Monthly, as well as on Electronics Boutique's internet web page. No substitution of prizes is allowed, except at the discretion of Working Designs, Inc., should one of the awarded prizes become unavailable.

Eligibility:

Contest open to residents of United States and Canada only. Non-compliance with the rules of the contest, and/or the return of the prize notification will be grounds for disqualification. In the event of a disqualification, the Grand Prize will be awarded to the next available entry. In the event of a disqualification, First and Runner-up prizes will not be re-assigned. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 30 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize winner(s) agrees to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of Working Designs; Sendai Publishing Group, Inc.; SEGA Enterprises, Inc.; Electronics Boutique and affiliates will not be eligible to win. Working Designs, Inc.; Sendai Publishing Group, Inc.; SEGA Enterprises, Inc.; Electronics Boutique are responsible for any damages, taxes, or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. Winner accepting prize(s) agree that all prize(s) are awarded on the condition that Working Designs, Inc.; Sendai Publishing Group, Inc.; SEGA Enterprises, Inc.; Electronics Boutique and their agents, representatives, and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses or damages of any kind resulting from acceptance, possession, or use of the prize(s). Winner further acknowledges that Working Designs, Inc., nor any of the contest sponsors has further made nor is in any manner responsible or liable for any warranty, representation or guarantee expressed or implied, in fact or in law, relative to any prize, including but not limited to its quality, mechanical condition, or fitness.

List of Winners:

For a list of winners, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Shining Wisdom Winners c/o Working Designs, 18135 Clear Creek Road, Redding, CA 96001. Requests for winners must be received by December 15, 1996. Allow four weeks for delivery of winners list.

Restrictions, Etc.

Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state, and local regulations apply. This contest is sponsored by Working Designs, Inc.; Sendai Publishing Group, Inc., and Electronics Boutique. SEGA Enterprises, Ltd. is not a sponsor. Shining Wisdom is a trademark of SEGA Enterprises, Ltd., licensed by Working Designs. SEGA and SEGA Saturn are trademarks of SEGA Enterprises, Ltd. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Electronic Gaming Monthly is a trademark of Sendai Publishing Group, Inc. Electronics Boutique is a registered trademark of Electronics Boutique, Inc.

Translation Notes

Shining Wisdom was programmed by one of SEGA's premier 3rd party developers in Japan, SONIC Team. At the height of its 10 month development process, upwards of 30 people were involved in creating art, programming, writing, and debugging the game. Hiroyuki Takahashi, the elder half of the famous Takashi brother team, oversaw all aspects of the game's development.

Since the planned conversion timeframe of the game to English was fairly short, a few playability improvements were not implemented. The most obvious one is to be able to equip more than one special item at once (for example, boots and a sword). This seems like a simple proposition, but would actually have required quite a bit of work to the inventory screens and the button assignments, introducing a fairly large risk of creating new, and potentially dangerous, bugs. So, we left it on our (and we're certain your) "wish-list" in the interests of getting the game out. We did, however, change some things, as usual, in the process of conversion. We changed the difficulty of the monsters to make the game somewhat more challenging. We also had a few bugs in the Japanese version that popped up in our play testing corrected. For example, Mars sometimes was able to get into areas "outside" the screen, with the result being that unless he had an Angel Wing, he would be left looking fondly at the dungeon from the wrong side of the wall until reset was pressed. And finally, in our never-ending anal-retentive quest for perfection, the name display routine was fixed so that possessive forms of a player's name would be rendered correctly. Instead of saying "Mars's House", the program was made to recognize that names ending in "s" needed only the apostrophe. Therefore the program automatically adjusts to say, "Mars' House" or "Joe's House", depending on the name. English teachers are letting out contented sighs at this news, I'm certain.

Speaking of English teachers, some of you have commented on the fairly consistent quality of our text conversion. This is mainly due to the fact that typos and grammatical errors are reduced to a minimum through a fairly straightforward process. First, we have a custom utility that filters all the sentences from the source files of a game and breaks those sentences into individual words, which are stored in a database, which also notes the file location of each word. Second, the database is sorted and an "incident count" is created. This tells us how many times each word is used. For example, "Pazort" is used 103 times in Shining Wisdom, and forms of it (Pazort's, etc) are used another 26, for a total of 129 incidents. Then, the condensed incident count list is run through an automated spell-checker, and the incidents flagged are checked using the file and line references attached to the words to see if they are misspelled on purpose (for example, a drunken patron might say, "haay...geed ovuur heer!" instead of "hey, get over here!"). After the spell checking, grammar checking is manually performed by staff (and a real-live English teacher!) using printout of just the text, with associated starting and ending line numbers for each text block. If a grammar or hyphenation error is found, the block is marked for correction. If text that is technically wrong makes it into the game, it's usually because the word or usage is in dispute, or the passage is a character's "dialect", or manner of speech. Once flagged grammar and spelling are checked and corrected, the text is processed one final time for spelling, in case any new errors were introduced during the grammar checking. While this doesn't mean we have picture-perfect dialogue, considering the volume of text in RPG's, this process definitely improves our product relative to the competition.

That's about it for this one. Our next title, *Dragon Force* is speeding along, and should be out about 8-10 weeks from now. Until then, happy gaming!

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Patent Numbers: U.S. Nos. 4,442,486/4,454,594/4,462,076/5,137,792; Europe Nos. 80,424;
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